

What is claimed:

1. A human prolactin-binding protein.
2. The human prolactin-binding protein of claim 1 which is isolated from human serum or milk.
- 5 3. The human prolactin-binding protein of claim 1 which is produced recombinantly.
4. A composition comprising the prolactin-binding protein of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.
- 10 5. A method for modulating somatolactogenic function comprising administering to a cell or an animal the prolactin-binding protein of claim 1.
6. A method for modulating somatolactogenic function comprising administering to a cell or an animal the composition of claim 4.
- 15 7. A method of inhibiting Nb2 cells comprising contacting Nb2 cells with the prolactin-binding protein of claim 1.
8. A method of inhibiting Nb2 cells comprising contacting Nb2 cells with the composition of claim 4.
- 20 9. A method for diagnosing disease or conditions associated with somatolactogenic function comprising:
 - obtaining a biological sample from a patient;
 - determining the level of the prolactin-binding protein of claim 1 in the biological sample; and

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